

Professor Botzenhart also describes the ICRC's efforts to organize the repatriation of seriously wounded prisoners of war to France via Switzerland. Under a special Convention of 11 March 1871, the repatriation of prisoners began as soon as the preliminary peace agreements were concluded, and by mid-July of that year nearly all the prisoners had returned to France.

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Victor Monnier, *William E. Rappard. Défenseur des libertés, serviteur de son pays et de la Communauté internationale*, Published by Slatkine, Geneva, Helbing and Lichtenhahn, Basel, and Champion, Paris, 1995, 900 pages.

This work, prepared under the guidance of Professor Giovanni Busino and with a preface by Professor Olivier Reverdin, is a very detailed and vividly written biography of William E. Rappard. After describing Rappard's New York childhood in his family of Swiss origin and his studies in Geneva, Berlin, Munich, Harvard, Paris and Vienna, Victor Monnier tells us of his appointment to the chair of economic history at the University of Geneva in September 1913, on the eve of the First World War.

The author goes on to relate how William E. Rappard took part in a mission of five delegates sent to the United States by the Swiss government from August to November 1917 in order to give the Americans a better knowledge and understanding of Switzerland and to explain to them the extremely difficult situation in which the war had placed it, particularly from the economic point of view. During this mission, Rappard was granted a personal interview with President Wilson, who told him about his plan to promote the creation of a League of Nations with a view to establishing a new international order. As a result of this mission, the United States and Switzerland concluded an agreement on 5 December 1917 which included the provision of supplies for Switzerland.

In October 1918, Rappard returned to the United States to sound out President Wilson's attitude towards the role of Switzerland and other neutral countries in the future League of Nations. On meeting the President for the second time, Rappard realized that he was not in favour of admitting neutral countries to the League, but nevertheless tried to persuade him to accept all the neutrals, as well as Germany — when the latter adopted a democratic system. After his return to Switzerland at the end of December, William Rappard took part in Swiss overtures to join the League of Nations, in the course of which he became more closely acquainted with the Legal Adviser to the Swiss Political Department (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Max Huber — who was to become President of the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1928. The two men thereafter held each other in great mutual esteem.

In January 1919, the Swiss government sent Rappard to the Peace Conference in Paris in order to “put out feelers” to the Allied delegates, particularly those of the United States, with regard to cooperation by Switzerland in establishing the League of Nations. In Paris Rappard again met President Wilson, who then stated that he was in favour of locating the League's headquarters in Geneva.

In the ensuing months, Rappard continued his efforts to enable Switzerland to join the League of Nations while retaining its neutrality, and also took part in a commission dealing with international labour legislation. On 28 June 1919, the Allies and the German plenipotentiaries signed the Treaty of Versailles, Article 435 of which provided that the signatories of the Treaty “*recognise the guarantees stipulated by the Treaties of 1815... in favour of Switzerland*”, in other words, its neutrality.

It was this Article 435, the adoption of which had been negotiated by Federal Councillor Gustave Ador — who was also President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, from 1910 to 1928 — that subsequently enabled Switzerland to join the League of Nations while retaining its neutral status.

The next chapter is devoted to the services that William E. Rappard rendered to the international community. Victor Monnier here describes how Rappard came into contact with the Red Cross by working, from July to October 1915, at the International Prisoners-of-War Agency established in August 1914 by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Two years later, in July 1917, Rappard became a member of that Committee.

During his missions in the United States in 1917 and 1918, Rappard established contacts with representatives of the American Red Cross, particularly with the President of its War Council, Harry P. Davison, whose proposal to set up a federation of National Red Cross Societies aroused his enthusiasm. In early February 1919, Davison convened a meeting in Cannes of the Red Cross Societies of the five Allied Powers — the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan — whose delegates drafted a joint plan of action for peacetime and went to Geneva to discuss their project with the ICRC. On 21 February 1919, in Paris, Davison gave representatives of governments and of the international press an account of his plan for setting up a League of Red Cross Societies, which was officially constituted on 5 May 1919 by the National Societies of the five Allied countries. Davison was elected President of the League and Rappard became its Secretary General.

In 1920, Rappard was appointed Director of the Mandates Section of the League of Nations, a post he held until 1924. At the same time he left his post at the League of Red Cross Societies, but remained a member of the ICRC, from which he finally resigned on 17 March 1921, mainly because of differences of opinion with his colleagues in that body concerning the division of tasks between the League of Red Cross Societies and the ICRC.

The Mandates Section provided the secretariat for the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission responsible for supervising the trusteeship exercised by the victorious States — the mandatory powers — over the former German colonies and the territories detached from the Ottoman Empire, namely Syria and Lebanon, which were administered by France, and Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq, which were administered by Great Britain. One of the tasks of the Mandates Section was therefore to analyse the reports regularly submitted by the Mandatory Powers.

On being appointed Rector of Geneva University, William Rappard became convinced that the presence of international organizations in the city should be conducive to the study of international matters. This idea was shared by several Geneva professors and politicians and was finally put into practice by the establishment of the Graduate Institute of International Studies, of which Rappard was appointed Director in October 1928. He nevertheless continued to take an interest in the work of the League of Nations, and in 1928 the Federal Council asked him to be a member of the Swiss delegation to the League; he subsequently combined this assignment with his work for the Mandates Commission.

In the 1930s, Rappard denounced the political systems of the USSR, Italy and Germany with equal vigour.

Throughout the war, Rappard pursued his activities at Geneva University and at the Graduate Institute of International Studies and took an active part in the work of the *Comité international pour le placement des intellectuels réfugiés* (International Committee for the Placing of Refugee Intellectuals) set up in Geneva in 1933. He also undertook several missions for the Swiss government. After the war, Rappard negotiated the return of the International Labour Office to Geneva, and the Swiss government entrusted him with yet another mission to the Government of the United States, this time with a view to restoring mutual trust between the two countries. In later years he represented Switzerland at several international conferences on the European economic situation and also at the sessions of the International Labour Conference held in San Francisco in June 1948 and in Geneva in 1949 and 1950.

During the final years of his life, Rappard continued his university career and published studies on the economic and political situation of the time, marked by the Cold War between the United States and the USSR. He also took an interest in the founding of the State of Israel, which he visited in 1949. He died on 29 April 1958.

This 900-page biography by Victor Monnier, based on extensive research in a wide variety of sources, will serve as an authoritative reference work on the life, personality and achievements of William E. Rappard.

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